31st ADA HHB soldiers conduct CBRN Training on Fort Sill

By: Staff Sgt. Nathan Akridge

"Gas, gas, gas!" These are three words that no soldier wants to hear on the battlefield, but with more countries possessing chemical weapons, the threat of a chemical agent attack is ever present on the battlefield. Soldiers from Headquarters and Headquarters Battery, 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade recently conducted Chemical Biological Radiological Nuclear (CBRN) Training. For the HHB leadership, the purpose of the training was quite clear.

"With the threats we face as Air Defenders in today's world, our soldiers have to be up on their life-saving skills," said 1st Sgt. Robert Bedford, HHB 31st ADA 1st Sgt. "And if you feel like I do, donning a protective mask in less than 9 seconds is one of those skills." The Soldiers had to don not only their protective mask, but also their entire Joint Service Lightweight Integrated Suit Technology, or J-List, in 8 minutes, to include the rubber protective boots and gloves. Although the training was straight forward, many of the Soldiers thought the approach made it very memorable.

"Our 1st Sgt. made it a fun challenge by timing us," said Spc. Tiffany McWilliams. "It made us bond together and compete with each other. It was fun watching each other and our leadership putting their J-List gear on."For some soldiers, this was their first time they went to Mission Oriented Protective Posture (MOPP) Level IV.

"It was my first time putting on the MOPP suit. This is my second duty station and I never put it on in Korea," said Pfc. Dacoda Worth, HHB, 31st Air Defense Artillery Brigade. "I'm glad that I learned how to put it on because now I am better prepared for a situation where I have to put it on. I feel more comfortable with it."

The 31st ADA BDE CBRN Non-Commissioned Officer in Charge, Staff Sgt. Charles Howard stresses that this training isn't a one-time training event."Training for CBRN is a continuous process, it's not something you react to; it's something you prepare for," added Howard.